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Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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therefore affords but slight foothold to mosses and lichens. The leaves of the beech are ovate, and distinctly marked by parallel veins proceeding directly from the mid-rib to the margin; in the spring they are fringed with beautiful delicate hairs, but these quickly wear off, the leaves assume their more business-like appearance for the summer. The clusters of barren and fertile flowers are borne on long slender stalks and may escape observation, unless carefully looked for. If you examine the fertile flowers you will find usually two together enclosed in a prickly involucre or calyx, which is afterwards, as you would suppose, the receptacle for the three-angled nuts. When the fruit is ripe this receptacle opens by four splits, which allows the seed to fall to the ground. Most of you are familiar with the appearance of the beech-mast, and know that often many hundreds of nuts are empty, and also that the involucre often remains closed, and clings tightly to the tree for several seasons, until wind and wet brings it to the ground.

This tree is readily grown from seed, and you may find hundreds of seedling beeches, in a favourable situation and season, covering the ground under the trees. The remarkable appearance of the cotyledons will at once attract attention; they are very large and wide spreading, vivid green above, and a pale silvery grey beneath. The beech prefers a chalky soil, and, in the counties of Sussex and Hampshire, the beech hangers form a conspicuous, and remarkable feature in the landscape. The ground under these trees is usually bare or very sparsely covered with vegetation, but this allows the beautiful structure of the beech to be well seen. The beech leaves lie for a long period without decaying, and, in the autumn and winter form a beautiful contrast in colour to the grey trunks and boughs above them. Hedges of beech are very common owing to its keeping on the leaves in its young state during the winter.

The growth of the beech is comparatively rapid, growing to the height of about twenty feet, in ten years. It is said that, with the exception of hollies, no tree will flourish along with the beech, for it quickly surmounts other trees, and the drip from its leaves is so great as to be very detrimental to vegetation. If the dead leaves under the trees are raked up and burnt, a great many wild flowers will soon spring up, such as primroses, violets, wood-sanicle, etc.

Living in the moss at the base of the beech you will find several snails that have assumed an appearance so like the buds, that it is difficult at first sight to distinguish them. *Clausilia bidens*. *C. Nigricans*, etc.

There are very few insects that feed on this tree in comparison with the oak, but a few caterpillars of some of our finest moths may be found; one, the curious lobster moth larva, a most grotesque creature, unlike any of our other caterpillars.

In many places the curious Bird's Nest Orchis may be found—it is a parasite—on the beech roots; also several fungi, such as the truffle and morel, etc.

Objects Examined.—Beech twigs, snail shells, drawings of caterpillars, moths, etc. Much progress has been made, in spite of the bad weather, in the out-door study of trees and twigs. Many beautiful drawings have been made and exhibited at our Wednesday evening meetings. The buds have now so much altered in appearance that we shall leave the twigs alone until their flowers are out.

BOOKS.

The Whispering Winds and the Tales they told, by Mary H. Debenham, with twenty-five illustrations by Paul Hardy. (Blackie and Son). This is a delightful book. No child could fail to be touched by the charm and quaint humour of the tales told by the winds. There is a noble lesson to be learnt in each. The style is excellent, and the pictures are charming. Our readers will be glad to learn that Miss Debenham has consented to write three tales this year in the *Budget*.

Ten Tales without a Title, by Edith Carrington (Griffith, Farran & Co., 5s.) Miss Carrington needs no introduction to our readers. This is not a new book, but as it has not been previously noticed in our book, we venture to bring it before the notice of those who have not seen it. It is a glorious book for the little ones, introducing them in short tales to the wonders of nature.

Finger Plays, by Emilie Poulsson. (J. Curwen & Sons, 2s.) These are written for little ones from three upwards. The music is tuneful and charming, and the words will attract all the babies. Each poem is well illustrated, showing the action of the fingers and hands in each verse. This is a counting lesson.

(Right hand).

Here is the bee hive. Where are the bees?
Hidden away where nobody sees.
Soon they come creeping out of the hive,
One!—two!—three! four! five.

(Left hand).

Once I saw an ant hill,
With no ants about;
So I said, "Dear little ants,
Won't you please come out?"
Then as if the little ants
Had heard my call—
One!—two!—three! four! five came out!
And that was all.

Good drawings both of bees and ants accompany the songs.

Children's Play and Work (yearly, £1; quarterly, 5s.) This is a magazine for boys and girls, which is carried on on different lines from all others. It not only gives tales, the newest games, but also enables the subscribers to make play things themselves by sending them the necessary materials to do so, all of which are included in the subscription. It is published by Fr. Tedesco & Co., 147, Great Portland Street, London, W.

Brushdrawing by Mrs. Francis F. Steinthal and Miss A. Leach (Arnold and Sons, Briggate, Leeds.) The members of the various branches of the P.N.E.U. who have had the pleasure of hearing a demonstration lesson on brushwork from Mrs. Steinthal will hail this volume with delight. It is still in the press as we write, but we hope it will be published in time for the second term of the P.R.S.; as no one can interpret what we mean by brushwork so fully as the author, from whom, indeed, we have derived many of our ideas on the subject.

We have received a very interesting parcel from the Kindergarten Literature Company, Woman's Temple, Chicago, U.S.A.:—

Child's Christ Tales (by Andrea Hofer, 4s. 6d.) Illustrated from the old masters, very quaint and sweet. In the hands of a mother who would know what to omit and what to put in (accurate Bible story) this little volume should be most suggestive.

Child Stories from the Masters (by Maude Menfee, 4s. 6d.) Delightfully told tales of Pippa, Mignon, Margaret, Faust, Beatrice, Friedrich Froebel, and other studies of the masters.

Mother Goose in the Kindergarten (Revised by F. S. Bolton, 3s. 6d.) The familiar nursery rhymes with gay and clever illustrations.

Songs from the Nest (by E. Huntington Miller, 2s. 3d.) Pretty, but perhaps the sentiment is sometimes a little too old for children. Also, may we venture to suggest, that two kinds of verse are proper for the little folk; the old nursery jingles and the child-verses of the poets.

Song Stories for the Kindergarten (by the Misses Hill, 5s.) The preface claims that "These songs are the result of an earnest endeavour to produce harmonious condition for growth in the child-garden." No doubt this is true, but we claim that singing should be spontaneous and should voice the child's emotions, whether of glee or pathos, without too much educational endeavour. Both songs and tunes are pretty.

We have already reviewed Mrs. Harrison's *Study of Child Nature*.

We have to notice a parcel of French books for the nursery and school-room received from Messrs. Hachette et Cie. *Nursery. Illustrated French Primer*, edited by Henry Bué, 1s. 6d. *French Nursery Rhymes*, by C.B., 1s. To be taught orally, on M. Gouin's method where possible. *Children from Six to Seven*. Orally, notes on M. Gouin's method. *Les deux Brigands*, par P. Souriau, 6d.; *Aventures de Trottino*, par Mme. J. Colomb, 6d. *The Junior French Book*, short stories adapted for very young children, edited by E. Janau, 1s. 3d. *Children from Eight to Nine. The Children's Own French Book* (stories), edited by Brette and Masson, 1s. 6d. *La Conversation en Classe*, par Mme. Bué, 8d. *La Lyre Infantile*, 1s. 3d. *Class-book of French Poetry for the Young*, by Paul Barbier, 1s. 3d. *Practical German Readings for Beginners*, by L. A. Happé, 2s. 6d. Let the teaching still be oral, but, after having learned his verse or paragraph, let the child write, with translation, and then read it. For children from ten to twelve the charming story of *Silvio Pellico* needs no praise (adapted by Rev. A. C. Clapin, 1s. 6d.) We have already recommended *Mon Journal* (3d. weekly) as a charming child's magazine. *Le Journal de la Jeunesse* (6d. weekly) would be greatly

enjoyed by older boys and girls who can read French. *Revue de Famille* edited by Jules Simon (1 fr. 50.) An interesting and able magazine, published fortnightly, which should be very helpful to readers who care to keep up their familiarity with the French tongue and with French thought. The *Revue* does not treat of family matters, but of current topics, literary and social.

DEAR EDITOR,—In *Harper's* for March, the Editor discusses the lamentable and growing ignorance of the Bible amongst young people in schools and colleges. He is referring of course to American schools, but I fear matters are no better in that respect in our own country. He points out that apart from its religious or from its ethical value, the Bible is the one book that no intelligent person who wishes to come into contact with the world of thought, and to share the ideas of the great minds of the Christian era can afford to be ignorant of. "This ignorance," he says, "can only be remedied by attention to the fundamental cause, the neglect of the use of the Bible in the home in childhood. If its great treasures are not a part of growing childhood, they will always be external to the late possessor. In the family is where their education must begin, and it will there be, as it used to be, an easy and unconscious education, a stimulus to the imagination, and a ready key to the great world of tradition, custom, history, and literature."

In the same magazine, St. George Mivart, in an article on "Heredity," in discussing the question whether acquired characteristics can be transmitted to posterity, differs from the opinion decidedly expressed by Prof. Weismann, and considers that they can be so transmitted.

The *Forum*, for January, contains several articles worthy of notice. Professor Story ably contrasts the idea that has been frequently suggested that ancient can be taught through modern, insisting that the resemblance is more apparent than real, and that the delicate and precise syntax, and lofty poetical and philosophical thought, would only be obscured by association with the grotesque mixture of foreign idioms, and the petty trivialities of the modern Greek press. Other articles are: "Free Travelling Libraries as a new aid to Popular Education;" "The Increasing Cost of Collegiate Education;" and "Motherhood and Citizenship: Woman's Wisest Policy;" by Mrs. Spencer Trask. The last writer enforces the high privileges and responsibilities of maternity as compared with the political status some are anxious to attain, and says: "As long as men are unjust to women, carelessly selfish and cruel, as they too often are, woman is sending forth proofs to the world of her own incapacity and failure, and she has no right to ask to be made ruler over more things until she has been made faithful to those already committed to her charge."

In the *Contemporary*, for February, Professor Clifford Allbutt, writing on Nervous Diseases and Modern Life, ridicules the idea that the weakness of our nervous systems, in the present day, is due to over-work. Quoting Carlyle's phrase, "There is nothing in this world that will keep the devil out of one but hard labour," he says: "our nerves are not used too

much, but too little. Even in the case of the young, though in our topsyturvy education we traverse the order of nature, and instead of discussing aptitudes, and following the openings of the budding intelligence, stamp into it the abstract conclusions of adult reason—yet, blunderers and crammers as we are, both in this respect and in the abuse of examination and scholarship systems, the instances of direct mischief are relatively few, . . . and in even these I suspect want of exercise, fresh air, and change of subject were more to be blamed than study itself." "By the great work of public health, we are bringing it about that no child shall be crippled or killed by preventible disease, and by educational reforms which are yet rather in sight than in action, we shall not attempt to repress but to intensify the nervous faculties of our young."

In the *British Weekly* for March 7th, is an interesting report of Canon Ainger's lecture at the Royal Institution on "Children's books of a hundred years ago," which number contains reminiscences by J. M. Barrie, and others of the late Prof. Blackie, whom all the country is mourning; and in my pocket-book I find, culled recently I know not whence, the following scraps:—Parents are like looking glasses for their children to dress themselves by." "We speak of educating our children; do we know that our children also educate us?" "Stern parents fill the world with bad men."

I must not close without recording here the appointment of one of our vice-presidents, Dr. Percival, to the Bishopric of Hereford, and to offer to him the respectful congratulations of an old and attached pupil.

PATER JUNIOR.

P.N.E.U. NOTES.

Edited by HENRY PERRIN, *Hon. Org. Sec.*

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To whom *Hon. Local Secs.* are requested to send reports of all matters of interest connected with their branches, also 30 copies of any prospectuses or other papers they may print.

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BELGRAVIA BRANCH.—*Sec.:* Miss Paterson, 28, Victoria Street, S.W. *Treasurer:* Mrs. Hallam Murray. On February 22nd, an interesting and instructive address was given by Dr. Francis Warner, entitled "A Study of Children;" a discussion followed in which Canon Furse and others took part. On May 21st, Rev. F. B. Westcott, Headmaster of Sherborne School, will lecture on "The Parents' Part in the Religious Training of Boys."

HYDE PARK AND BAYSWATER BRANCH.—*Hon. Sec.:* Mrs. E. L. Franklin, 9, Pembridge Gardens, W. On February 20th, Miss Helen Webb, M.B., in a lecture on "The Hygiene of Needlework," drew attention to the need of using every means to develop the imagination and originality of children, and one such she maintained was to be found in "Freehand" needlework as opposed to ordinary traced fancy-work. Miss Webb explained her methods and shewed many beautiful specimens. She also dwelt on the hygienic and soothing effect of such work on invalids and convalescents. Mrs. Howard Glover occupied the chair.

Mr. Howard Swan's lecture on the "Gouin System" will be held on April 4th, at 9, Lancaster Gate (by the kindness of Mrs. Stanley), Mr. A. Coote, M.A., in the chair.

A training course on the "Gouin System" will commence in May. Mrs. Franklin will be glad to receive the names of intending members, as also for the "Out-door Natural History Lessons" to commence in May, on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons. She is at home on Thursday mornings, when she will be glad to give all particulars as to the work of the branch.

HAMPSTEAD AND ST. JOHN'S WOOD BRANCH.—*Hon. Sec.:* Mrs. C. Herbert-Smith, The Retreat, North End, Hampstead—On February 20th, Mrs. Marks read a paper entitled "Female Education 200 years ago." Rev. Dr. Brooke Herford, who was in the chair, followed with an interesting account of the education of girls in the State of Massachusetts at the same period. The next meeting will be on April 24th, when Dr. Macnaughton Jones will speak on "Alcohol—its use and abuse."